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UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021

Summary

Seventy years after UNICEF was established, the organization's mission to promote the full attainment of the rights of all children is as urgent as ever.

The UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 is anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and charts a course towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of a future in which every child has a fair chance in life. It sets out measurable results for children, especially the most disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations, and defines the change strategies and enablers that support their achievement.

Working together with Governments, United Nations partners, the private sector, civil society and with the full participation of children, UNICEF remains steadfast in its commitment to realize the rights of all children, everywhere, and to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a world in which no child is left behind.

The Executive Board is requested to adopt the draft decision included in section IX.

* E/ICEF/2017/14.

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Working together to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Common chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women

Our commitment

As we set our strategic directions for the next four years, we — the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) — commit to working better together, characterized by stronger coherence and collaboration. We note with appreciation the United Nations Secretary-General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Together we will step up our joint efforts, with a sense of urgency, to better support countries to achieve sustainable development. In line with the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR), we will help shape a United Nations development system that responds to our changing world and works in increasingly effective ways to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. Our strategic plans represent a clear commitment to United Nations reform and greater coherence in support of results.

Key areas of collaboration

The principles of *leaving no one behind* and *reaching the furthest behind first* permeate all four of our strategic plans. In direct response to the QCPR, we will harness our respective collaborative advantage in compliance with our respective mandates in these key areas:

(a) Eradicating poverty;

(b) Addressing climate change;

(c) Improving adolescent and maternal health;

(d) Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

(e) Ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development;

(f) Emphasizing that development is a central goal in itself, and that in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations the development work of the entities of the United Nations development system can contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace, in accordance with national plans, needs and priorities and respecting national ownership.

These areas of collaborative advantage have positive multiplier effects across the Sustainable Development Goals and require multisectoral approaches for which the diversity of the United Nations system is an asset. They also provide a basis for closer collaboration with other United Nations entities as well as other partners. As detailed in the annex to the common chapter of the strategic plans, our outputs will complementarily contribute to common results in these key areas, in accordance with our respective mandates and comparative advantages. The results will be tracked by the common Sustainable Development Goal indicators that are adopted at outcome or impact level in our respective strategic plans, including but not limited to the following:

(a) *Eradicating poverty*: SDG 1.1.1. Proportion of population below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographical location;

(b) *Eradicating poverty*: SDG 1.3.1. Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable;

(c) *Adolescent health and HIV*: SDG 3.3.1: Number of HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations;

(d) *Gender equality*: SDG 5.2.1. Proportion of ever partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age;

(e) *Strengthening data for sustainable development*: SDG 17.18.1. Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the fundamental principles of official statistics;

(f) *Prevention, resilience, climate change*: SDGs 1.5.1 and 11.5.1 and 13.1.1. Numbers of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population.

Strengthening how we work together

We will work together more effectively at all levels. Most importantly, our strategic plans reflect a change in how we work at country level, recognizing there is no "one size fits all", and fully affirming the primary responsibility of national Governments for their countries' development and for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance.

We will plan together. As part of United Nations country teams we will support national governments and partners to work towards common results and indicators, and collectively report on them through the revised United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as signed by national governments, to drive stronger efficiency and effectiveness. In a significant step forward, these common results will now be underpinned by a mandatory common country assessment from which theories of change can be drawn, and knowledge and expertise can be collaboratively used. This is an important improvement. During the 2030 Agenda era, the United Nations development system, at the country level, will support national priorities on the Sustainable Development Goals; share a common analysis of the issues; and plan, monitor and report on shared results. This increased programmatic collaboration will strengthen system-wide coherence at all levels as we draw data from joint analysis at country level. This change can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of entities meeting or exceeding the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women minimum standards; and (b) percentage of country offices applying the standard operating procedures according to country context.

We will implement programmes together differently. We will continue to support field offices in developing joint programmes, joint results groups and joint workplans in support of country priorities. On financing, we commit to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. We will work to leverage public finances, including official development assistance, and support the adoption of policies to increase resource flows for the benefit of partner countries. We will promote integrated partnerships, using the full range of financing tools in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. Building on experiences from

the common budgetary framework at country level, we are moving to jointly support financing strategies for the Sustainable Development Goals, including through innovative financing. These changes can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of country offices engaged in joint programmes; (b) thematic funding as a percentage of other resources; and (c) percentage of country offices that track and report on allocations and expenditures using gender markers.

We will enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships. Reflecting the people-centred nature of the 2030 Agenda, we will support innovative platforms that strengthen collaboration with Governments as well as with civil society and the private sector. We will build on recent progress in engaging citizens through volunteerism, empowerment, participation and other means to strengthen national ownership and capacity, and delivery of the sustainable development agenda. We will also intensify collaboration through multi-stakeholder partnerships at national, regional and global levels, and assist in improving mutual accountability for the Sustainable Development Goals in such partnerships. These changes can be tracked through indicators including but not limited to: (a) percentage of total resources from contributions by donors other than the top 15; and (b) percentage share of total funding coming from private sector partners.

We will enhance efficiency together. Underpinning the drive for ever-greater effectiveness and building on progress made in recent years through the standard operating procedures, we will continue to accelerate efficiency gains through business operations strategies, mutual recognition, and broader operational harmonization. These changes can be tracked through indicators including, but not limited, to the percentage of country offices implementing a business operations strategy.

All of the Sustainable Development Goal and QCPR-based indicators presented in this common chapter and in the annex to the common chapter are a subset of a much larger number of indicators shared by two or more entities that can be identified in the results frameworks of the respective strategic plans. We will report on all common indicators through the annual reports on the implementation of our respective strategic plans.

Looking forward

While fully recognizing that the findings and recommendations of the Secretary-General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda will be discussed by Member States, we will continue to fully support the process steered by the Secretary-General and retain the flexibility to respond accordingly to the decisions of Member States through the midterm reviews of the strategic plans.

I. Overview

A. Context of global opportunities and challenges

1. The world has made considerable progress towards realizing the rights of children in the past two and a half decades. The number of children who die before their fifth birthday declined from 12.7 million in 1990 to 5.9 million in 2015. The primary school net enrolment rate in low- and middle-income countries reached 91 per cent in 2015, up from 83 per cent a decade and a half earlier, and gender parity in primary education continues to improve. These are but a few examples of the many advances made for children.

2. Yet, while much has been achieved, many of the world's most disadvantaged girls and boys have not benefited from this progress. Even in countries in which national targets were achieved, they masked glaring inequities within those same countries. Compared to children in the highest income group, the poorest children are nearly twice as likely to die before the age of 5, twice as likely to be stunted, and five times more likely to be out of school. Some 32 million girls are still out of primary school as compared to 29 million boys, with adolescent girls more likely to be illiterate than adolescent boys.

3. The Strategic Plan has been prepared at a time of immense challenges. Conflict and civil strife, natural disasters and climate change, and global epidemics, compounded by other major and often linked trends such as rapid urbanization and mass population movements, all threaten the prospects of leaving no child behind. Rapid demographic shifts and the growing youth bulge in Africa and parts of Asia will bring opportunities to achieve demographic dividends. This will, in turn, depend on reducing equity gaps among children in these continents through scaling up of essential services for the most disadvantaged children and equal opportunities for girls and boys.

4. **Humanitarian response** will potentially continue to be a growing feature of the organization's work. Children in fragile contexts are twice as likely to die before the age of 5, or to be out of school. Girls, in particular, are likely to experience sexual violence and to be at increased risk of harmful practices such as child marriage. Approximately 28 million children have been uprooted by violence and conflict.

5. Despite these challenges, numerous opportunities exist to accelerate progress for children. The 2030 Agenda puts children at the core of the global agenda. In addition to Governments, the private sector is playing an increasingly active role in development. Social media is empowering citizens to exercise their voices, and civil society is helping to expand opportunities for children.

6. Considerable evidence also exists about what works to deliver results for children, and what must change in order to accelerate progress. Starting with the most deprived children is not only right in principle, it is also cost-effective and practical. A focus on children's rights will help the world move more swiftly towards the progressive realization of the targets of the 2030 Agenda.

7. The Strategic Plan therefore reflects the principles of the 2030 Agenda, including the pledge to *leave no one and no child behind* and *to reach the farthest behind first*.

B. Building on the lessons from the previous Strategic Plan

8. Key lessons have emerged over the period of the previous Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.[1]

9. Among these are the need for UNICEF to intensify the strengthening of national systems to assist the most disadvantaged girls and boys. There is a need to scale up equity-focused programming and advocacy, including by focusing interventions on the most disadvantaged children. Increased investment in disaggregated data will greatly improve the monitoring of inequality and discrimination prohibited by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities..

10. Evaluations have also underscored the importance of intensifying community engagement and social mobilization for addressing the demand-related barriers to the fulfilment of child rights.

11. In promoting accountability for child rights, UNICEF should intensify support for inclusive and meaningful participation of children in decisions that affect them, and to ensure that the best interests of the child remain a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.

12. In light of the scale, frequency and complexity of humanitarian crises, risk-informed programming and systems strengthening have become vital for prevention, response and early recovery. Evaluations have highlighted that risk analysis (including analysis of the underlying causes of crises and the different vulnerabilities and risk exposures of affected populations), emergency preparedness, and enhancing humanitarian investments that contribute to longer-term development outcomes, as a key means of strengthening the coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming.

13. Experience across all regions confirms the importance of integrated approaches that address the underlying causes of child rights violations. For example, in protecting girls and boys from violence, exploitation and harmful practices, a key lesson is the importance of strengthening child protection, social protection, education and health systems in an integrated way. The 2016 QCPR emphasizes the use of such integrated approaches as well as the importance of promoting gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls as key to sustainable development.

14. The evaluation on the Review of development effectiveness in UNICEF, 2012-2015, recognizes that country programmes should be strengthened to adequately address gender equality, including through systematic application of gender analysis during programme design and delivery. The review further observes that strengthening results monitoring, reporting and management requires a range of measures, including capacity development for UNICEF staff and for implementing partners, as well as the strengthening of monitoring systems.

15. Furthermore, UNICEF should continue to strengthen its partnerships with Governments and within the United Nations development system, with a view to accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda. UNICEF also needs to continue to build on its strong and diverse country programmes of cooperation, network of National Committees, and growing partnerships with the private sector and civil society to accelerate the realization of the rights of all children.

[1] This section is based on the findings of various recent evaluations; the MOPAN 2015-16 Assessments: United Nations Children's Fund, Institutional Assessment Report; and the paper 2016 midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Lessons learned.

C. Guiding principles of the Strategic Plan

16. The Strategic Plan is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides the foundation for everything UNICEF does. It is also guided by other international human rights treaties and instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF works with partners to respect, protect and promote human rights standards and principles, and fundamental freedoms for all girls and boys, without distinction of any kind whatsoever.

17. The Strategic Plan pursues a vision of realizing the rights of every child and does so by starting with the most deprived, because a focus on equity accelerates progress towards achieving the rights of all children. In this context, the Strategic Plan focuses on operationalizing the call to leave no child behind by emphasizing accelerated action for the most marginalized children, including in humanitarian situations. Through sustained advocacy in all contexts, use of disaggregated data and a renewed focus on at-scale service delivery and systems strengthening, UNICEF will work with others to make sure no child is left behind.

18. UNICEF will strengthen the mainstreaming of gender equality across the organization's work, in line with Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. The Strategic Plan includes enhancing gender-responsive programming for the achievement of results for girls and boys as well as for strengthening systems and processes.

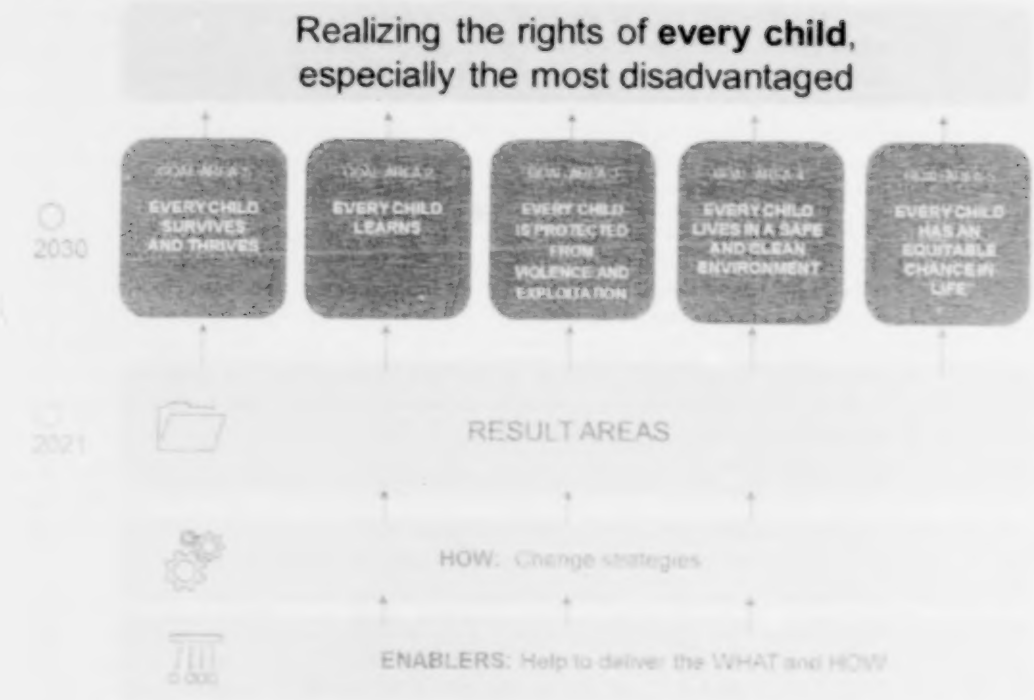
19. With universality as a defining feature, and with a strong anchor in human rights, the Strategic Plan focuses on elements of the 2030 Agenda that bear special relevance for children, namely Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 6, and 16. In addition, UNICEF will work with partners to address the key drivers of inequality, urbanization, climate change, discriminatory practices and the widespread lack of human security (Goals 10, 11, 13 and 17) that undermine the realization of the rights of all children. The Strategic Plan also responds to the outcomes of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

20. The Strategic Plan reflects the collaborative advantages of UNICEF and other United Nations entities to pool expertise and reduce duplication in the achievement of results for children. It is also based on the organization's mandate and comparative advantages in relation to United Nations entities in support of the 2030 Agenda. These relate to normative work on child rights, policy advocacy, systems strengthening and service delivery with the goal of leaving no child behind; and maintaining the capacity to scale up humanitarian action while contributing to more resilient and responsive national and local systems.

II. Key elements of the Strategic Plan

21. The Strategic Plan describes the results to be achieved by UNICEF and key partners by 2021 in the context of the 2030 Agenda (the WHAT). It also describes the groups of children who will be reached in diverse contexts (the WHO); the change strategies necessary for the achievement of results (the HOW); and the internal factors that support the change strategies and the achievement of results (the ENABLERS). See the figure below.

Figure: Key elements of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021


Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged
2030
EVERY CHILD SURVIVES AND THRIVES
EVERY CHILD LEARNS
EVERY CHILD IS PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION
EVERY CHILD LIVES IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
EVERY CHILD HAS AN EQUITABLE CHANCE IN LIFE
2021
RESULT AREAS
HOW: Change strategies
ENABLERS: Help to deliver the WHAT and HOW

Envisaged impact

22. Overall, the Strategic Plan seeks to contribute to the realization of the rights of all children, especially the most disadvantaged. This envisaged impact will be achieved through five Goal Areas:

(a) Every child survives and thrives;

(b) Every child learns;

(c) Every child is protected from violence and exploitation;

(d) Every child lives in a safe and clean environment; and

(e) Every child has an equitable chance in life.

23. The fifth Goal Area on "Every child has an equitable chance in life" underpins and cuts across the four others. The Goal Areas are also underpinned by the cross-cutting priorities of gender equality and humanitarian action. In addition, the Strategic Plan promotes synergies across multiple Goal Areas to address early childhood development, adolescent development, and to support children with disabilities.

24. With a focus on children in all contexts, the Goal Areas are interlinked and are reflective of the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda. Progress under each Goal Area requires, and contributes to, progress under the others. For example, gender equality in learning and skills development, especially for girls at the secondary level (Goal Area 2), is important for reducing child marriage (Goal Area 3) and for adolescent empowerment (Goal 5).

25. The results framework of the Strategic Plan incorporates the impact, outcome and output indicators necessary for monitoring progress. These have been identified on the basis of the UNICEF mandate and comparative advantage in the 2030 Agenda in relation to United Nations entities. While impact- and outcome-level results reflect the combined efforts of all partners, including United Nations entities, output-level results reflect the organization's specific contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

26. Examples of specific collaboration modalities with United Nations entities are described in the annex to the common chapter.

27. While the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 builds on its predecessor, it has evolved in several ways. The composite nature of Goal Area 1, which incorporates health, nutrition, early childhood development and HIV/AIDS, reflects the importance of integrated approaches to child survival and development. Goal Area 2 prioritizes learning, placing a stronger emphasis on outcomes in education while retaining due attention to access, especially for the most disadvantaged children. Goal Area 3 seeks to protect children from violence and exploitation. Goal Area 4 focuses on the impact of the environment on children's survival and development. And Goal Area 5 aims to address the key dimensions of inequity that prevent children from realizing their rights.

28. In addition to the Goal Areas, the Strategic Plan includes a learning agenda on some of the key emerging issues facing girls and boys. Adolescent suicide, mental health, road safety and child online safety are examples of areas where UNICEF will work with partners to learn more about what produces brings about results for girls and boys and develop appropriate and scalable models for response.

Goal Areas

29. **Goal Area 1** aims to ensure that every child survives and thrives. It supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2, 3 and 5 in both humanitarian and development contexts; and supports articles 6 and 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

30. More than 40 per cent of children under five are at risk of not reaching their physical, cognitive, psychological and/or social and emotional potential due to poverty or poor health and nutrition, including poor care and nurturing practices. The underlying causes include weak delivery systems, unsafe environments and protracted humanitarian crises.

31. Infectious diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria remain the leading causes of death among children under five, with neonatal mortality accounting for a growing proportion of deaths among this age group. Disasters, conflict and epidemics exacerbate this situation due to disruption of access to functioning of essential health services, and increased exposure to health risks for affected populations.

32. Malnutrition is an underlying factor in approximately half of under-five deaths globally, resulting in about 3 million preventable child deaths each year. Malnutrition hinders a child's development, often with lifelong consequences. Currently an estimated 4 million children with severe acute malnutrition are living in countries affected by humanitarian crises.

33. Poor maternal health and care continue to undermine the well-being and rights of women and adolescent girls while also weakening children's chances of surviving and thriving.

34. The HIV epidemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on children. Children under five living with HIV face the highest risk of AIDS-related death. AIDS also remains a leading cause of death among adolescents, with strong gender

dimensions. New HIV infections among adolescents — two thirds of whom are among girls — are projected to rise from 250,000 in 2015 to nearly 400,000 annually by 2030 if progress in reaching adolescents is not sustained.

35. In this context, UNICEF, working with other United Nations entities and other partners, will contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal targets on maternal, neonatal and under-five mortality; HIV and AIDS; and stunting and other forms of malnutrition, while promoting early childhood development and gender-responsive adolescent health and nutrition.

36. UNICEF will support Governments to identify and address bottlenecks to the availability and use of quality health, nutrition, HIV and early childhood services. Actions will include systems strengthening, especially at the subnational and community level to address key illnesses, including diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria and tuberculosis; enhancing the quality of care; strengthening communication for development; improving procurement and distribution systems and influencing markets; improving gender analysis; and better coordination with the delivery of water and sanitation services (Goal Area 4) and social protection (Goal Area 5). UNICEF will also support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for childhood diseases. No child should be left behind — UNICEF will work ambitiously towards the realization of universal health coverage for all children.

37. UNICEF will also work with other United Nations entities and other partners to strengthen preparedness for public health emergencies.

38. In humanitarian response, UNICEF will support scaled up nutrition assessments and surveillance, management of severe acute malnutrition and infant and young child feeding support; as well as scaled up life-saving interventions through population- and community-based services. UNICEF will also support scaled up efforts that integrate GBV prevention and risk mitigation in nutrition and health programmes. UNICEF will support and advocate with partners for measures in line with international humanitarian law to ensure that children and their families are not denied access to food and essential health-care services, and to prevent the destruction or damage of critical civilian infrastructure such as hospitals.

39. **Goal Area 2** aims to ensure that every child learns. Education is a right enshrined in articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is also a driver of equity, poverty reduction, empowerment, peaceful and inclusive societies and economic growth. Educating girls is particularly transformative: evidence shows schooling for girls, especially at the secondary level, opens lifelong opportunities for them. Goal Area 2 therefore supports the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 4 and 5, in both humanitarian and development contexts.

40. Globally, more than half of preschool-aged children, 61 million primary-school-aged children and 60 million lower-secondary-school-aged adolescents and 142 million upper secondary school-aged adolescents lack access to learning opportunities. This includes children living in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, who account for more than half of out-of-school children.

41. Despite progress, girls are still more likely to be out of primary school than boys. Moreover, in countries affected by conflict, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys. Progress towards education for all is limited in part due to the exclusion of the poorest and other vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and children belonging to minorities.

42. By itself, however, access to education is not enough to guarantee that a child learns. Globally, an estimated 250 million children in primary school are not learning the basics of reading and mathematics. There are also large learning gaps within and

between countries. Weak education system capacity and protracted crises are common underlying causes among countries that have been unable to meet children's learning needs.

43. Working with partners, UNICEF will emphasize strengthening education systems to ensure that schooling translates into learning outcomes, especially for the most marginalized children, and that systems are backed by resources to respond to the risk of disaster, conflict and other shocks. UNICEF will seek to increase opportunities for the most marginalized boys and girls, from early learning to upper secondary, including supporting the provision of non-formal and accelerated learning for those children already left behind.

44. UNICEF will also focus on improving systems that develop the skills of girls and boys throughout childhood, including adolescence, to promote equitable learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship, non-violence, gender equality and employability, both in and out of schools. No child should be left behind. More needs to be done for girls, in particular to improve safety and eliminate sexual- and gender-based violence and abuse.

45. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will work to ensure continued access to learning programmes for affected children. In addition to supporting the provision of safe and secure learning environments, UNICEF will support life skills development for children and youth, including psychosocial support. UNICEF will also advocate and engage with relevant partners for measures in line with international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of children and educators as well as prevent the destruction or damage of schools.

46. **Goal Area 3** seeks to ensure that every girl and boy is protected from violence and exploitation, in both humanitarian and development contexts. This includes all forms of violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. The duty to protect children from violence and exploitation is enshrined in numerous articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including articles 19, and 34 to 38. Goal Area 3 supports the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

47. Global estimates point to hundreds of millions of girls and boys experiencing some form of violence, exploitation, or harmful practice. One in 10 girls under the age of 20 has experienced forced intercourse, rape, or other sexual acts. Boys are also at risk of sexual violence. Almost 750 million girls and women were married as children, and at least 200 million girls and women have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting. Hundreds of thousands of refugee and migrant children are at grave risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, including trafficking and smuggling. In addition, at least 2.7 million children, many of them children with disabilities, live in residential care.

48. In emergencies, additional child protection interventions are necessary to address heightened vulnerabilities due to the protection risks that humanitarian crises exacerbate and the new protection risks that emerge. This is particularly the case for displaced children; children who are unaccompanied, separated or orphaned; children and women at risk of, or directly affected by GBV; children living in areas affected by armed conflict; children with disabilities; and children belonging to minorities.

49. Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights across the world. Conflict situations, disasters and displacement can intensify the various forms of GBV that girls and women are subjected to even in times of peace. Limited availability of formal protection and justice systems and separation of families and communities combine to increase the risk of GBV and diminish possibilities for treatment, healing and recovery. The increasing scale of people

affected by humanitarian crises requires UNICEF to step up its response to GBV in emergencies.

50. Working with other United Nations entities and partners, UNICEF will seek to protect children from violence and exploitation, focusing on reducing violence, eliminating harmful practices against girls, reducing exploitation and enhancing children's access to justice.

51. UNICEF will focus on the specific protection needs of girls and boys and their best interests, and on strengthening the protective environment through critical investments in national systems, community dialogue and behaviour change. In particular, UNICEF will support Governments to strengthen and expand their social services infrastructure and case management systems, and will work with communities to increase their capacity to protect children.

52. Building on the principle of state accountability, UNICEF will support capacity development programmes for justice and administrative bodies as well as civil registration systems. The objective is to make sure that child victims, witnesses or perpetrators seeking to access justice, and/or participating in criminal, civil and administrative justice processes, are treated in accordance with international standards. UNICEF will also advocate for policy and legislative changes, and will support capacity development of national human rights institutions to facilitate access to child-friendly remedies.

53. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will support community-based approaches to the provision of psychosocial support to girls, boys and women experiencing GBV, including by providing safe spaces. UNICEF will also work to prevent family separation and support reunification of unaccompanied and separated children, strive to prevent child recruitment, support the release and reintegration of girls and boys associated with armed forces and groups, and continue to support programmes for prevention and provision of survivor assistance to children affected by landmines and explosive arms. UNICEF will seek gender-responsive protection for children exposed to grave violations in situations of armed conflict, and scale up support services to survivors. Approaches to results-based management will integrate analysis of risks to children and women related to disaster, conflict, climate change and other shocks, and strengthen coherence and complementarity between development and humanitarian programming. Streamlining of business processes with other United Nations entities will continue.

54. UNICEF will continue to advocate with all parties to a conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and human rights standards and support the monitoring and provision of timely and appropriate advocacy and programme responses to, child rights violations.

55. **Goal Area 4** prioritizes a safe and clean environment for children, a right enshrined in article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Goal Area contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 13 and 16.

56. Access to safe water, improved sanitation and proper hygiene is vital to the well-being of girls and boys. It contributes to good health and nutrition (Goal Area 1), quality learning (Goal Area 2), and dignity, especially for women and girls.

57. There have been significant advances in expanding access to improved water and sanitation in recent decades. However, an estimated 2.4 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation and 663 million people lack access to improved drinking water sources. Half a billion women and girls do not have access to adequate menstrual hygiene management. In humanitarian situations, access to safe water and sanitation is often interrupted and eroded, including as a strategy of war or a consequence of hostilities.

58. Millions of children around the world are also affected by conflict and fragility, climate change, natural hazards and air pollution. A safe and clean environment for children is more important than ever.

59. Today, more than half of the world's children live in cities, including many in urban slums. It is imperative that city planning is responsive to the rights of women, girls and boys.

60. Some 28 per cent of the world's children live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, a figure projected to increase to one third by 2030. Climate change and natural disasters also pose grave risks to children and their caregivers, most of whom are women: more than half a billion children live in areas with an extremely high flood risk, and nearly 160 million children live in high, or extremely high, drought severity zones.

61. To address the challenges related to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), UNICEF will continue to work with partners to strengthen national systems, with particular attention to gender considerations. UNICEF will also support initiatives for WASH in schools and health centres, taking into account the specific needs of women, girls and children living with disabilities. UNICEF will support efforts to scale-up programmes and services that improve menstrual hygiene management for adolescent girls. Complementary efforts will focus on community platforms to address behavioural and social barriers.

62. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will provide life-saving access to safe water and will support gender-responsive hygiene and sanitation. Within its mandate, UNICEF will also support and advocate with partners for measures that prevent denial of access to water and sanitation services to children and their families as well as their destruction or damage.

63. UNICEF will work with United Nations entities to support countries to develop or strengthen policies and programmes related to climate change, disaster risk reduction and peacebuilding so they are responsive to the needs of women and children, and will strengthen the coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming by supporting systems to better prepare for, respond to and recover from shocks and stresses.

64. In cities, UNICEF will support the expansion of essential services to the poorest urban communities; work with local authorities to make city planning child-responsive; and strengthen the evidence base on equity gaps among children.

65. **Goal Area 5** underpins other Goal Areas by addressing some of the key dimensions of inequity that prevent children from realizing their rights. It supports the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 1, 5 and 10; and supports numerous articles such as 2, 23, 26 and 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

66. Much of the deprivation experienced by the most disadvantaged children is as a result of living in poverty, their being girls or young women, children with disabilities, or children belonging to minorities.

67. Poverty has lifelong consequences for children. Children are two times more likely than adults to be living in poverty, and a child living in poverty is also more likely to grow into an adult living in poverty. Gender inequality perpetuates poverty.

68. Through collaboration with other United Nations entities and other partners, UNICEF will support Governments to routinely measure and report on multidimensional child poverty. It will also support the adoption of national plans and budgets to address child poverty. UNICEF will continue working to expand cash transfers, especially to mothers, for the benefit of the most disadvantaged children,

and to strengthen national social protection systems, including preparedness for scaled up responses in the event of humanitarian crises.

69. The organization's priorities for Goal Area 5 also include addressing inequitable roles and practices among girls and boys; enhancing support for children with disabilities; reducing multidimensional child poverty; strengthening social protection for children and promoting adolescent empowerment.

70. To promote gender equality, UNICEF will seek to address discriminatory policies as well as the socialization processes and narratives that define gendered roles and practices, supporting girls and boys from early childhood through adolescence to adopt and shape more equitable gender norms and behaviours. Initiatives will include parenting and early childhood programmes, community engagement, adolescent participation and engagement; gender-responsive training for frontline workers, including as part of preparedness for humanitarian response; and support for legal and policy change.

71. Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized of all children. They are less likely to attend school, access medical services, or have their voices heard. In humanitarian situations, children with disabilities face increased risk of violence, and they are often excluded from receiving humanitarian assistance.

72. UNICEF will continue supporting countries in addressing the many barriers that impede results for girls and boys with disabilities, with the aim of providing inclusive services. Furthermore, UNICEF will continue to invest in the generation and use of data on children with disabilities.

73. Adolescence is a crucial developmental period that profoundly influences the life trajectories of girls and boys in dramatically different ways. While adolescents have the potential to become powerful agents of positive change, too often their specific needs are not prioritized.

74. To promote their empowerment, UNICEF will support national policies and service delivery systems that are responsive to the needs of adolescent girls and boys. It will promote platforms for the systematic participation of adolescents in decisions that affect their lives, and will support programmes that nurture them as informed social actors and enhance their civic engagement.

75. UNICEF will continue to promote the rights of children belonging to minorities to equal access to social services and to a life free from discrimination. Actions will include the use of data and evidence to highlight issues affecting minority children; support for the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and strengthening of systems for monitoring child rights.

76. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will support cash transfer programmes to help families to gain access to goods and services in a dignified manner, and to strengthen national social protection systems. UNICEF will also focus on addressing exclusion through support for a gender-responsive front-line response and providing a combination of services that are disability inclusive. Support will be provided to country offices and partners to strengthen data on programme performance, community engagement and accountability mechanisms.

77. UNICEF is committed to making sure that the rights of all children are fulfilled, everywhere. The success of the Strategic Plan will be assessed by whether the children who are the most left behind benefit from the results achieved. Details of the groups of children who will be reached in diverse contexts are outlined in the results framework of the Strategic Plan.

III. Cross-cutting priorities

Humanitarian action

78. Principled humanitarian action and delivery against the UNCEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action are essential parts of the UNICEF mandate. Protecting children in humanitarian situations while addressing their needs and vulnerabilities is essential to ensuring progress towards the 2030 Agenda. It also has a greater impact where it enhances humanitarian investments that contribute to longer-term development outcomes and accelerates resilient development.

79. In accordance with its mandate, the focus of UNICEF will be the delivery of faster, more effective and at-scale humanitarian response in line with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, including adaptations for an effective response to health emergencies and during mass population displacements and protracted crises. This will include a renewed emphasis on increasing the reach and quality of humanitarian assistance; on recognizing the profoundly different and gendered impacts that crises have on women and men, girls and boys; and on ensuring the centrality of protection, with particular attention to grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

80. System strengthening efforts will include support to national coordination, effective strategies and capacities for rapid scale-up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations. The humanitarian response will more systematically include community engagement and accountability to affected people and communities, including through communication for development and platforms for adolescent participation. The UNICEF response will, wherever possible, engage and support national and local first responders.

81. UNICEF will further strengthen its humanitarian action through enhanced risk-informed programming, including investments in key preparedness actions, national and subnational risk assessments, and advocacy for risk reduction strategies in development plans and sector policies to contribute to social cohesion and peaceful societies. The UNICEF response will support coordinated needs assessments and inter-agency humanitarian response strategies and planning, including through cluster coordination mechanisms. It will strengthen coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming not only to better respond to immediate needs, but also contribute to collective outcomes with the aim of reducing needs, vulnerabilities and risks over multiple years.

82. UNICEF business processes will support more coherent results-based management across development and humanitarian programming, and greater transparency and application of the International Aid Transparency Initiative standards to humanitarian reporting as well as harmonized and streamlined processes with implementing partners.

83. UNICEF will also work with other United Nations entities and other partners to support more agile data-collection methods and systems and joint analyses appropriate to fragile and humanitarian situations.

84. An illustrative summary of Strategic Plan humanitarian targets is annexed to the results framework.

Gender equality

85. The organizational focus on equity recognizes the criticality of equality between girls and boys, and the intimate link between the welfare and rights of women and that

of children; a tremendous evidence base shows that the well-being of children is most often predicated on women's survival, protection and opportunity.

86. Important progress has been made in promoting gender equality worldwide, yet much remains to be done. In many countries, girls continue to be less valued than boys and have fewer opportunities to survive and thrive.

87. Fragile, conflict-affected and disaster-prone contexts may further exacerbate gender inequality and the disproportionate burden and responsibilities women face in supporting and protecting children.

88. Building on the Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017, as well as system-wide efforts to promote gender equality, gender results are integrated into each of the five Goal Areas of the Strategic Plan. These results include quality maternal care; menstrual hygiene management; nutrition for women and girls; equitable learning and skills for girls and boys; reducing child marriage; and transforming gender discriminatory roles and practices. In addition to gender-equitable outcomes, the Strategic Plan places strong emphasis on addressing some of the key barriers to the empowerment of adolescent girls. Engaging men and boys as a part of the change is critical for addressing the root causes of gender-based discrimination and transforming social norms.

89. There is a strong focus on mainstreaming gender analysis in programme design and delivery, strengthening the collection and utilization of disaggregated data, forging partnerships, building capacity, achieving gender parity in staffing, and effectively using resources. Gender equality results and strategies are further elaborated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021. UNICEF and the other United Nations entities have also proposed common indicators for coordinated action in support of gender equality.

IV. Change strategies

90. This Strategic Plan outlines the change strategies (the HOW) for the achievement of results under the five Goal Areas. With human rights principles and standards at the core of its activities, UNICEF delivers change by combining high-quality programmes at scale, harnessing innovation and collecting evidence, in partnership with Governments, other United Nations partners, civil society, the private sector, communities and children. It uses these to leverage wider change nationally and globally through advocacy, communications and campaigning. UNICEF also builds public support around the world to volunteer, advocate and mobilize resources for the cause of children, and works with partners to achieve an even greater impact. The key change strategies UNICEF will focus on during 2018-2021 include:

91. **Programming for at-scale results for children**. UNICEF will foster cross-sectoral and multisectoral programming that provides a holistic and rights-based response to children and to the environment in which they live. UNICEF will support policy, capacity development and systems strengthening at national and subnational levels to improve the delivery of essential services to the most disadvantaged children, including coordination and rapid scale up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations, and strengthening social protection systems to be ready to scale up cash transfers in emergencies. On the basis of evidence, UNICEF will also focus on scaling up programming to support behaviour change and community engagement, including in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will enhance coherence and connectedness between at-scale capacity for humanitarian action and longer-term programming, including support to common needs assessment and analysis of risks related to disaster, conflict, climate change and other shocks, and corresponding risk-informed programming with partners. These complementary approaches will support

the coherence between humanitarian and development programming. Promoting cooperation, sharing lessons learned and fostering innovation and partnerships through South-South and triangular cooperation will also be emphasized.

92. **Gender-responsive programming** in all contexts. In order to foster high quality, gender-responsive programme design, implementation and monitoring, UNICEF will continue improvement and standardization of tools, technical assistance, capacity-building and guidance for country offices to undertake a robust gender analysis and to prioritize evidence-based, effective change strategies that are most suited to the organization's comparative advantage. These strategies are further elaborated in the Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021.

93. **Winning support for the cause of children from decision makers and the wider public**. UNICEF will become an even stronger advocacy, campaigning, fundraising and communications force for children, working with others to build alliances and movements for change. Through this public engagement, the organization will make progress towards recruiting 100 million supporters to the cause of children, to volunteer, advocate and give. This strategy also includes strengthening the UNICEF brand, and supporting young people and children as agents of change.

94. **Developing and leveraging resources and partnerships for children**. UNICEF will advocate for domestic financing and budgeting for programmes that benefit children. It will also maintain a strong focus on mobilizing resources from Governments and the private sector — including individuals, foundations and corporations — to maximize longer-term, flexible and predictable funds in support of UNICEF programmes and advocacy for children, including for preparedness and humanitarian action. The rationale for an increased focus on resource mobilization is a reflection of the ambition of the 2030 Agenda, growing demand from host Governments to collaborate on interventions at scale that can deliver the transformative change envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals, and the need to respond to the continued frequency and complexity of humanitarian crises.

95. In support of the 2030 Agenda, UNICEF will continue to strengthen partnerships with Governments for at-scale results for girls and boys. Collaboration with civil society partners will be increased, including continued engagement with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, foundations and academic institutions, to advocate and act on behalf of children. Strategic and operational partnerships will be enhanced with international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the regional development banks. UNICEF will also expand its collaboration with the business community to leverage their core assets on behalf of children.

96. There has been strong growth in revenue over 2014-2017 period with actual revenue 21 per cent higher than the amount planned during the mid-term review. An in-depth analysis of global public and private sector resource mobilization trends has identified areas for additional growth, particularly through an increase in the recruitment and retention of monthly pledge donors and enhanced focus on legacy, corporate and foundation fundraising opportunities. This will be underpinned by the ability of UNICEF to demonstrate results and value for money. Total income for 2018-2021 is projected to be $22.8 billion, out of which $16.5 billion will be other resources, and $6.3 billion will be regular resources, which are projected to increase at a faster pace, driven mainly by increases from the private sector. Resources will be directed to the areas of greatest need, making sure that no child is left behind. The integrated resource plan and integrated results and resources framework that support the Strategic Plan are presented in tables 1 and 2 that follow.

97. **Harnessing the power of business and markets for children**. At both global and country levels, UNICEF will continue to leverage the power of private sector

partners to improve the lives of children around the world, harnessing their core business and innovation, and advocating for them to uphold child rights. UNICEF will continue to influence global and local markets for children, including pursuing a research and development pipeline of vaccines, medicines and technologies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets. This will require attention to reducing market barriers that inhibit access to essential supplies for children.

98. **United Nations working together**. In alignment with the 2016 QCPR, UNICEF will work with other United Nations entities to strengthen system coherence and to introduce more integrated approaches with a view to achieving better results for children and the 2030 Agenda. Efforts will focus on: promoting UNDAFs that are more strategic, anchored in human rights standards and principles, aligned with national priorities, and based on common needs assessments and common analysis; enhancing the quality and depth of engagement in country-level results groups; leading or co-leading groups within relevant areas of strategic focus and comparative advantage; and implementing the standard operating procedures for Delivering as One.

99. UNICEF will also collaborate with United Nations development system partners to develop system-wide actions for cross-cutting issues such as the reduction of poverty and inequality; gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; adolescent and maternal health and HIV; coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development programming; climate change; and disaggregated data for sustainable development. Common indicators will help to track actions by the four entities in support of these six areas. UNICEF will rely on strong partnerships with members of the United Nations family and others to achieve lasting results for children in these areas and others highlighted in the results framework. Key United Nations partners are listed against each Goal Area in the results framework.

100. The common indicators will also be pursued at the country level through UNDAFs or related instruments, including humanitarian response plans.

101. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF will continue its support to humanitarian country teams to deliver results for children and their families. UNICEF will continue to invest in its role as cluster lead agency for nutrition, WASH, and co-lead for education and for the child protection area of responsibility, as well as host of the secretariat for the communication and community engagement initiative. UNICEF will also continue to strengthen partnerships with national and first responders as well as support their engagement in cluster coordination mechanisms.

102. In addition to its collaborative work with UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women to achieve results under the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will rely on strong partnerships with other members of the United Nations family, including: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; the Department of Political Affairs; the International Labour Organization; the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict; the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the World Food Programme; and the World Health Organization.

103. **Fostering innovation for children**. This will include enhancing the use of technologies to better engage communities and enhance social accountability, including in humanitarian action. This change strategy will also involve identifying the most promising programme innovations for different contexts while supporting partners to adopt, adapt and scale up the most successful approaches.

104. **Harnessing the power of evidence as a driver of change for children.** Evaluations, research and data are key elements of sound programming, advocacy and leveraging partnerships for children. Identifying the most marginalized groups is a prerequisite for leaving no child behind. There will be a strong focus on research, policy analysis and evaluation of what works for children, and an emphasis on the collection, analysis and utilization of data, including in fragile situations. UNICEF will work with partners to fill data gaps as well as increase availability of disaggregated data on the 37 child-focused Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

V. Operational effectiveness and efficiency

105. The Strategic Plan sets out measures to improve the internal effectiveness and efficiency of UNICEF (the ENABLERS). The enablers support the delivery of results and change strategies and comprise four interconnected elements:

(a) internal governance;

(b) management;

(c) staff capacity; and

(d) knowledge and information systems.

106. **Enhancing internal governance in support of the universal mandate of UNICEF.** In support of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 2030 Agenda, the UNICEF business model is to partner with the public and private sectors, United Nations entities, civil society organizations and citizens to support the fulfilment of the rights of children, everywhere, especially the most-disadvantaged, including in humanitarian situations. UNICEF will continue to be guided by the Executive Board on the most appropriate type of engagement in a given context. UNICEF will continue to invest the majority of its resources in least developed countries while working in other contexts in support of national priorities and in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The trend shows that support for service-delivery is largely centred in the least developed countries as well as countries in humanitarian situations. Yet, even in such contexts UNICEF continues to engage in at-scale systems strengthening, policy development and normative work, thereby providing a full range of support. In middle-income countries, at-scale systems strengthening, policy development and normative work, backed by modelling of programmes that work for children dominate the work of UNICEF. In high-income countries, UNICEF will continue to be guided by Executive Board decision 2016/11 on the most appropriate type of engagement.

107. UNICEF will manage emerging risks to programmes and operations through an updated enterprise risk management (ERM) framework that enables managers to use a single, comprehensive methodology. An updated ERM policy will be implemented in 2018 to support well-managed risk-taking and mitigating strategies.

108. Risks will also be managed by the organization being even more transparent. UNICEF will build on its current solid ranking in the Aid Transparency Index by providing more frequent data on results and resources, including application of transparency standards to humanitarian reporting.

109. Furthermore, UNICEF will introduce an anti-fraud strategy articulating measures to strengthen deterrence, prevention and detection of fraud, including risks related to implementing partners and contractors. It will also identify an enhanced pathway for remedial action and recovery of losses.

110. Further efforts will be made to mainstream value-for-money considerations related to programmes and management, including from the inception of programme development to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

111. **Oversight functions** will receive increased attention. A strengthened internal audit function will bolster the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls and its recommendations will strengthen the organization's risk management. The evaluation function will continue to support the organization's work across all areas. The Evaluation Policy will be revised following an external peer review in 2017, and will focus on improving the quality and use of evaluations, especially at the country level. UNICEF will achieve the target of a minimum of 1 per cent of programme expenditures devoted to evaluations within the Strategic Plan period.

112. UNICEF is committed to making its offices accessible and inclusive for all, and is also working to improve the eco-efficiency of its operations, including in humanitarian settings.

113. **Enhancing management efficiency and effectiveness**: Building on previous work, UNICEF will continue to enhance the skills of staff and partners in results-based management, including the design and delivery of country programmes. Programme monitoring and reporting will be reinforced through new tools and near-real-time learning. Implementation of recently introduced guidance to country offices on the development of programme strategies and theories of change will be sustained. UNICEF will also strengthen results-based budgeting through the adoption of a new budget formulation tool.

114. UNICEF will strengthen its Global Shared Services Centre for the enhanced delivery of efficient services. Through vertical integration and economies of scale, UNICEF will achieve cost savings and further reduce processing time for country offices.

115. With other United Nations entities, UNICEF will pursue horizontal integration through a business operations strategy that aims to simplify and harmonize business processes and consolidate administrative support services. Particular emphasis will be placed on enhanced quality of services, collaborative procurement and common premises.

116. **Strengthening staff capacity**: Flexible approaches to the deployment of staff will be pursued. A versatile and mobile staff, supported by advances in information and communications technology (ICT), will expand the reach of UNICEF actions. This will include adopting non-traditional operating modalities, such as assigning staff to work remotely, or in regional hubs. These will also further enhance gender equality in the workplace.

117. UNICEF will continue to support staff at all levels through processes and systems aimed at: (a) ensuring the right people are in the right place at the right time; (b) providing clarity on what is expected of staff, and ensuring they are equipped to deliver on those expectations; (c) fostering a culture of continuous learning as well as professional and personal growth; (d) strengthening skills for strategic engagement with new partnerships, including foundations, development banks and the private sector; and (e) maintaining staff motivation and engagement, and an environment that allows everyone to contribute to their full potential.

118. Given the need for increasingly flexible options for deployment, staff must be able to meet new challenges wherever they occur, with a wide range of technical capabilities, core skills and knowledge.

119. UNICEF will continue to evaluate the performance of each individual, the organization will also increasingly focus on assessing and recognizing office-level contributions to results.

120. In line with the QCPR, UNICEF will continue its efforts to achieve gender and geographic balance in appointments at all levels, with due regard to female candidates and nationals from programme countries. UNICEF will also enhance its overall capacity, expertise and learning on mainstreaming gender equality. Capacity-building programmes on gender-responsive programming will be rolled out to UNICEF staff and partners in both development and humanitarian contexts.

121. Enhancing knowledge and information systems for programme results and organizational efficiency and effectiveness: As UNICEF strengthens its position as a knowledge leader and advocate for children, it will require continued investment in knowledge-sharing and information management. This includes building digital engagement and fundraising platforms and leveraging social media to catalyse millions of volunteers for the cause of children.

122. To facilitate knowledge transfer and exchange, UNICEF will provide staff with the tools needed to support interactions and active collaboration with other United Nations system staff, partners and others, and will work to improve knowledge resources.

123. Governance of ICT will continue to be strengthened. Inefficiencies will be reduced by introducing new digital platforms, data sources and analytics that are integrated with existing systems. An overarching goal will be to provide connectivity and access to information and systems to all staff, regardless of their location or specific role.

124. In so doing, it will be critical to adhere to transparency principles and to deliver open source solutions to the greatest extent possible. This will entail increasing awareness around information and cybersecurity, and ensuring a solid enterprise architecture of core information systems that can harbour safe data for UNICEF as well as its partners and beneficiaries, while ensuring institutional resilience and business continuity. The UNICEF response in emergencies will also expand from providing core telecommunications and Internet access to including information management and use of geospatial technologies.

VI. Risk management

125. In a changing world, an effective risk management framework that identifies and mitigates risk, while firmly oriented towards enabling the organization to deliver, is critical. UNICEF has identified several risks that have the potential to limit the full roll out of the Strategic Plan. These include: insufficient resources to implement an ambitious agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; increasing scale of recurring and new humanitarian crises; in many contexts, inadequate capacity of national partners for at-scale implementation of programmes; inadequate monitoring capacity, particularly in sudden and complex emergencies; uneven focus on results for children among United Nations partners working together; challenges with systems and procedures for United Nations partners working together; and challenges in results-based budgeting as part of the broader management for results agenda of UNICEF.

126. The change strategies and enablers discussed above are explicitly designed to help to mitigate these risks. Flexible funding will allow UNICEF and partners to leverage and commit resources where they are most needed. New resource partnerships, particularly through harnessing the power of business and markets, will

be key in this regard, and will also enable UNICEF to help to mitigate the risk of insufficient resources. Limited implementation and monitoring capacity among some partners can be overcome with an expanded agenda on systems strengthening by United Nations entities and key partners as well as with continued investment in systems to gather, analyse and disseminate evidence on what works for children. Stronger community engagement enabled by innovative technologies will further expand the capacity to implement and monitor programmes.

127. A mobile, versatile workforce, enabled by agile deployment arrangements, will also help to strengthen implementation capacity where it is most needed, including in sudden-onset emergencies, and flexibility in business operations will increase interoperability with key United Nations partners. Robust ICT systems will be essential to achieving this flexibility and to keeping pace with the risks and opportunities posed by rapidly evolving technology. They will also be vital for strong results-based management systems that ensure proper alignment of resources and results. The integrated results and resources framework and new budget formulation tool will also be key, as will the planned guidance on value for money. A more detailed discussion of the risks and mitigating strategies is described in a separate paper on the Theory of Change for the Strategic Plan.

VII. Monitoring and evaluation

128. The results framework will outline impact- and outcome-level indicators of the Strategic Plan, largely derived from the Sustainable Development Goals. Baselines, annual milestones and end-of-cycle targets for output indicators will help to track the UNICEF contribution to the Goals. Monitoring information from all levels of the organization will be made available to the public through the UNICEF Transparency Portal <http://open.unicef.org>. The annual report of the Executive Director to the Executive Board will continue to serve as the vehicle for reporting on progress towards the Strategic Plan, including the indicators listed by United Nations entities in the annex to the common chapter. The mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will provide opportunities for reflection and adjustment.

129. For purposes of monitoring the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will continue to strengthen its data and information systems, including expanding use of the organizational performance monitoring system (inSight) and the effective tracking of gender equality and humanitarian results. Improved knowledge-sharing platforms will facilitate the exchange of good practices across the organization and with United Nations partners and others. Internal guidance and the recently developed results-based management learning package will facilitate translation of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan into sector strategies and country programmes. Key results for the most deprived children will be tracked and reported with global partners through development of national monitoring systems in as a part of country programmes. All of these systems will help to strengthen the coherence and complementarity of development and humanitarian programmes.

130. UNICEF will also focus on enhancing the capacity of key systems at the country level, including information management and accountability systems, to provide more timely and better quality information for decision makers. In line with the QCPR, UNICEF will enhance evaluation capacity at country level and support the articulation of gender results through the UNCT scorecard. On the basis of broad consultations, UNICEF will design and implement a new plan for independent corporate evaluations, and will give increased attention to the sharing and uptake of evaluation evidence.

VIII. Conclusion

131. The world is changing faster than ever before, and so too are the threats, challenges and opportunities facing its children. Yet children's rights remain the same — immutable, indivisible, interrelated and universal. To meet these challenges and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and using the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights standards and principles as guiding tools, UNICEF, as well as its many partners, must be sufficiently nimble and adaptable to respond to these changing dynamics while remaining steadfast in its core mandate to promote the fulfilment of children's rights. The Goal Areas, change strategies and enablers outlined in this Strategic Plan position UNICEF to meet this challenge and to deliver lasting results for children, bringing the organization closer to realizing the vision of the 2030 Agenda, a world in which no child is left behind.

IX. Draft decision

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (E/ICEF/2017/17/Rev.1 and E/ICEF/2017/18).

Annex

Table 1 — Integrated resource plan, 2018-2021

	Approved 2014-2017 Midterm Review (E/ICEF/2016/AB/L.2/Rev.1)							*2018-2021*						
	Regular resources		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*	*Regular resources*		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*
			Programme	*Cost recovery*						*Programme*	*Cost recovery*			
	$m	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*
1. Resources available														
Opening balance	575.3		1 853.1	–	2 428.4		586.0	562.3		1 235.9	–	1 798.2		727.0
Income														
Contributions	4 697.7		13 685.7	–	18 383.4		–	5 801.9		16 512.5	–	22 314.4		–
Other income and reimbursements	402.5		–	–	402.5		–	500.0		–	–	500.0		–
Total income	5 100.2		13 685.7	–	18 785.9		–	6 301.9		16 512.5	–	22 814.4		–
Tax reimbursement adjustment	(76.6)		–	–	(76.6)		–	(80.0)		–	–	(80.0)		–
Trust fund receipts			–	–	–		7 577.0			–	–	–		7 148.0
Total available	**5 598.9**		**15 538.8**	**–**	**21 137.7**		**8 163.0**	**6 784.1**		**17 748.4**	**–**	**24 532.6**		**7 875.0**
2. Use of resources														
A. Development														
A.1 Programmes	3 651.8	69.1%	13 429.1	–	17 080.9	86.0%	7 333.0	4 360.0	67.9%	15 917.3	–	20 277.3	84.6%	7 116.0
Country programmes	3 471.8	65.7%	12 900.6	–	16 372.4	82.5%	–	4 140.0	64.5%	15 107.1	–	19 247.1	80.3%	–
Global programme	180.0	3.4%	528.4	–	708.5	3.6%	–	220.0	3.4%	810.2	–	1 030.2	4.3%	–
A.2 Development effectiveness	467.4	8.8%	100.1	–	567.5	2.9%	–	589.0	9.2%	133.0	–	721.9	3.0%	–
Subtotal: Development	4 119.2	78.0%	13 529.2	–	17 648.4	88.9%	7 333.0	4 949.0	77.1%	16 050.3	–	20 999.3	87.6%	7 116.0
B. United Nations development coordination	20.3	0.4%	16.3	–	36.6	0.2%	–	23.3	0.4%	25.9	–	49.3	0.2%	–
C. Management	531.2	10.1%	–	904.2	1 435.4	7.2%		459.9	7.2%	6.4	1 138.0	1 604.3	6.7%	
D. Special purpose														
D.1 Capital investments	20.4	0.4%	–	34.6	55.0	0.3%	–	23.0	0.4%	–	57.0	80.0	0.3%	–

	Approved 2014-2017 Midterm Review (E/ICEF/2016/AB/L.2/Rev.1)							*2018-2021*						
	Regular resources		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*	*Regular resources*		*Other resources*		*Total resources*		*Trust funds*
			Programme	*Cost recovery*						*Programme*	*Cost recovery*			
	$m	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*$m*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*
D.2 Private fundraising and partnerships, direct/investment costs	410.6	7.8%	86.0	–	496.6	2.5%	–	725.1	11.3%	273.0	–	998.2	4.2%	–
D.3 Other	182.5	3.5%	–	–	182.5	0.9%	–	240.0	3.7%	–	–	240.0	1.0%	–
Subtotal: Special purpose	613.4	11.6%	86.0	34.6	734.1	3.7%	–	988.1	15.4%	273.0	57.0	1 318.2	5.5%	–
Total institutional budget (A.2 + B + C+ D.1)	**1 039.3**	**19.7%**	**116.4**	**938.8**	**2 094.5**	**10.5%**	**–**	**1 095.2**	**17.1%**	**165.3**	**1 195.0**	**2 455.5**	**10.2%**	**–**
Integrated budget (A + B + C + D)	**5 284.1**	**100.0%**	**13 631.5**	**938.8**	**19 854.4**	**100.0%**	**7 333.0**	**6 420.3**	**100.0%**	**16 355.6**	**1 195.0**	**23 971.0**	**100.0%**	**7 116.0**
3. Closing balance of resources	**314.7**		**968.5**		**1 283.3**		**830.0**	**363.8**		**197.8**		**561.6**		**759.0**

Table 2 — Integrated results and resources framework, 2018-2021

		2018-2021			
		Regular resources	Other resources		Total resources
			Programme	Cost recovery	
Goals	Functional cluster	$m	$m	$m	$m
Programmes		**4 360.0**	**15 917.3**		**20 277.3**
Goal Area 1 — Every child survives and thrives		1 744.0	6 366.9		8 110.9
Goal Area 2 — Every child learns		872.0	3 183.5		4 055.5
Goal Area 3 — Every child is protected from violence and exploitation		523.2	1 910.1		2 433.3
Goal Area 4 — Every child survives in a safe and clean environment		845.8	3 088.0		3 933.8
Goal Area 5 — Every child has an equitable chance in life		375.0	1 368.9		1 743.9
Organizational effectiveness and efficiency					
1	**Higher quality programmes through results-based management**	**589.0**	**133.0**		**721.9**
	Technical excellence in policy and programmes	500.2	124.2		624.3
	Technical excellence in procurement and management of supplies	53.5	8.8		62.3
	Technical excellence in humanitarian action	35.3			35.3
2	**Improved management of financial and human resources in pursuit of results**	**459.9**	**6.4**	**1 138.0**	**1 604.3**
	Leadership and corporate direction	10.7	1.9	26.5	39.1
	Corporate oversight and assurance	13.8		34.1	47.8
	Corporate financial, information, communications and technology, and administrative management	70.4	.6	174.1	245.1
	Staff and premises security	8.1		20.0	28.1
	Corporate external relations and partnerships, communication and resource mobilization	71.8		177.6	249.4
	Corporate human resources management	27.1	3.8	67.1	98.0
	Field/country office oversight, management and operations support	258.1		638.6	896.7
3	**Coordination of the United Nations Development System**	**23.3**	**25.9**		**49.3**
	United Nations coherence and cluster coordination	23.3	25.9		49.3
4	**Special purpose**	**988.1**	**273.0**	**57.0**	**1 318.2**
	Capital investment	23.0		57.0	80.0
	Private sector fundraising	725.1	273.0		998.2
	Other, including procurement services	240.0			240.0
	Total resources	**6 420.3**	**16 355.6**	**1 195.0**	**23 971.0**